THE UNITARIAN CALENDAR

Why should I wish you "Merry Christmas?"
My wish can bring no joy — or yours.
Joy ever comes unsought,
As fragrance comes to him who gathers flowers
Upon the path he treads.
Go, gather flowers of kindness!
Be Christly.
Enact the brother's part.
Give as the Christ has given,
Asking no favor in return.
Make merry some sad heart,
And then, unwished, enjoy
A Merry Christmas!

C.

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OUR NATIONAL SOCIETIES

With headquarters in the building of the American Unitarian Association, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

Local offices at 104 East 20th Street, New York City; 175 Dearborn Street, Chicago, Ill., and Cor. Franklin and Geary Streets, San Francisco, Cal.

THE AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION

Founded in 1825.

The chief missionary organization of the Unitarian churches of America. It supports missionaries, establishes and maintains churches, holds conventions, aids in building meeting-houses, publishes books, tracts, and devotional work.

Address correspondence to the Secretary, Rev. Lewis G. Wilson.

Address contributions to the Treasurer, Francis H. Lincoln, Esq.

Publication Agent, Mr. C. L. Stebbins.

UNITARIAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL SOCIETY

Founded in 1827.

Maintained by the Unitarian churches to promote religious and moral education. Publishes manuals and tracts, issues a Sunday-school paper, holds conventions, carries on a book-room. Branch at 175 Dearborn Street, Chicago.

President, Rev. Edward A. Horton.

Treasurer, Mr. Richard C. Humphreys.

Superintendent of book-room, Mr. Philip C. McMurdie.

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NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF UNITARIAN WOMEN

Organized in 1890.

Promotes the local organization of the women of the Unitarian churches for missionary and denominational work.

Address correspondence to the Clerk, Miss Florence Everett.

Address contributions to the Treasurer, Mrs. Lucia Clapp Noyes, Mattapan, Mass.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S RELIGIOUS UNION

Organized in 1896.

Promotes the organization of the young people of the Unitarian churches for "Truth, Worship, and Service."

Address correspondence to Miss Grace R. Torr.

Address contributions to the Treasurer, Mr. O. Arthur McMurdie.

The Unitarian Calendar

VOL. 2 DECEMBER, 1909 No. 4

THE PARAGRAPHER

What infinite injury and injustice have been done by the sanctifying of one place and the secularizing of others. How can one land be more holy than any other, when God is in all lands alike? Is Palestine any more holy than Patagonia, or Canaan more suggestive of the presence of God than Canada? Let us at last rid ourselves of the absurdity of believing that the holy is something local and confined, and realize instead its universality. If one place can be more holy to you than any other, it is the square foot of ground on which you are standing at this moment. You will nowhere find ground more holy.

I accept the rational principle in religion because reason is the crowning faculty in evolution; because it is the wisely-accepted basis in all other realms of thought and action; because, by its very character, it is the most trustworthy principle of perception and proving; because it can reveal God and the verities of religion; because it was the accepted basis of the thought of the greatest teachers that the world has ever known. Let us therefore recognize it as truly religious, and esteem it as the very gift of God for good.

Jesus was a rationalist, a believer in the personal perception, a proclaimer of the self-perceived, a confessor of convictions. He did not passively accept

the traditional old. The Sermon on the Mount was largely a contrast between tradition, as he had received it, and truth as he had perceived it. He dared to trust his own judgment and to make amendment to the sacred old. He was no apostle of the orthodoxly accepted. He spoke, not the truth according to prophets, but the truth according to himself. Modern Christianity is based upon the reasoning of the man Jesus, and the brave utterance of his rational findings.

All nature is under the dominion of law. There is not a cubic inch of sea or air or land that is not under its absolute control. The planet and the dust-speck alike yield obedience to it. But this dominion of law is equally a fact in spiritual life. A soul and a seed are both subject to it. And by this law a good act is rewarded and the evil act is punished, and nothing can come between the act and its result. If you would be saved from sin and imperfection, keep the law. There is no other way. The law will not be set aside for you or any other. Therefore look well to your act.

Upon our conception of human nature depends the character and worth of our religious faith and philosophy. What the soil of the farm is to the farmer, what the fineness of the instrument is to the musician, what the foundation is to the lighthouse, human nature is to the soul of man. If it be truly good, fine and firm, then can we hopefully sow seeds of the good, sing songs of the beautiful and stand firmly as lighthouses of the true. The very basis and bedrock of the Unitarian philosophy is the goodness of human nature. This is its fundamental assertion, upon which all else is based.

The highest aim is the development of the divine in man. Those who have the keen sight of love may detect its presence in every one. They know that as the slime hides the lily root and blossom, as the hard rock holds the precious ore, as the acorn encompasses the oak, so every human life contains the potentiality of the divine. They are not deceived by the external slime and hardness and meanness, but perceive and have faith in the inherent and the ultimate. To be aware of the divinity of the soul, and every soul, is to know the sublimest truth disclosed to the human mind.

The aim paramount in religion should not be happiness hereafter, but helpfulness here. Religion should be a matter of action, and not of anticipation. It should deal with life, and life here and now. No true man cares how he dies. His attention is centered upon how he lives,—the dying will take care of itself. His religion expresses itself in deeds of helpfulness; his future happiness will be its natural sequence. The value of a man's religion can always be reckoned in the coin of kindness. The verity of his hope of the hereafter is seen in the vigor of his helpfulness in the present.

There is nothing higher than a human life. All the countless cycles of evolution have been working toward the consummation of a created man. Upon the base of matter rose the cone of evolution till it found its apex in the creation of a divinely human soul. You, living today, in this last moment of time, are the product of all evolving forces, the heir of all the age-old efforts of the universe, the supreme aim of the Almighty incarnate in human flesh, the final fruition of the eternal purpose of God. Respect yourself as one high and holy.

So long as Christians seek to keep their religion inside the church when there is corruption outside, there can be little hope for a betterment of social conditions. It is only when religion becomes an active and animating force in all of life, that life shall be purified and ennobled. It must be said to the shame of most of us that we have never made any practical application of our religious principles to the political life of our country. We have prayed one thing and voted another. We have never yet sought to be in politics what we have at least recognized we ought to be in religion. When we unite our politics we may hope for better things.

All men are in reality one in nature and at heart. The things that divide men into different and antagonistic classes are always superficial, if not unreal. The large soul realizes that he is one with his fellows in all that is of any real significance. He knows that the life he lives is at unity with the life of all mankind, and that he is only part of the great human whole. He knows himself as one possessing the same life, nature, tendencies, inherent forces, possessed by all men. Seek to attain this largeness of soul and recognize your unity with all mankind.

The real saint of to-day is the man whose life is full-orbed and well-rounded, and who takes his full share in the duties and responsibilities of daily life. He does not seclude himself in a cave or a convent, but lives strongly and sanely in the open. He does not spend his time making prayers, but rather his energy in working for that for which others are praying. He does not talk much about God, or think much about heaven, but his whole life evinces the fact that he believes in the one and deserves the other. Yet if you were to call him a saint — try it!

THE UNITARIAN CHRISTMAS

To the religious liberal who has outgrown the old forms of faith and thought, Christmas loses none of its real significance. While certain interpretations of it must necessarily be abandoned, the larger fact and more stimulating significance are coming with the liberal thought. While we can no longer celebrate the day as being the anniversary of the birth of God in human form, we can look back to it as the time when there came into the world a human life so strong, noble, and pure, that when it had passed on through the gateway of death, millions of men were compelled to believe that it could have been no less than divine. It is the humanity of Jesus that gives to Christmas its real and its only significance. We celebrate the birth of a man who though humanly human was divinely alive. Though he possessed only the instrument of our human nature, he produced from it such exquisite harmony that after twenty centuries of death the modern world still remembers and reveres the man.

Do you realize the practical sequence of this larger thought? What was sung of one life must be sung of all. What was wondrously true of that babe-life of ancient time is equally true of every babe that draws its first breath this day. Would you worship the Christ? Behold the Christ-spirit in all lives about you, — lives common, unfamiliar, unprized. Christmas is no mere echo from the past. It is not a commemoration so much as it is a conviction.

C. W. C.

THE HUMAN GOD

I would summarize the needs and tendencies of the human soul in a single radical expression; the modern soul of man requires an experience of God as human. I would discover in human life the essence and aroma of the divine. The difference between your *you* and your God is in the main a

gross quantitive matter. The larger life is larger than you in very obvious fact, but not diviner. The great God himself in all his powers and privileges is not more righteous nor more loving, nor diviner, than you would most instinctively be, had you those same great energies and opportunities. You are infinite comrades, most literally and prosaically infinite, — you! You, veriest beast of the earth, in those qualities wherein you do touch the living powers and the divine graces of the world's soul, you are infinite, I say! You are God's maximum, as God is your maximum. What becomes you becomes God. Where you are, there he is! What you are, that he is! When you are, then he is!

This is what we Unitarians at this point in human history need to lay to heart, if we would remain true to the genius of humanity which is our natural birthright. Let's lay it to heart, then! Just allow ourselves to think unafraid, unashamed, and plainly that God is most actively human; that his spirit is right poignantly involved in human relations, very strictly present in human being; that he moves in human destinies, ascends in all our human flights of justice and righteousness; that his spirit watches and pushes and pulls in all the efforts of our human race! God Almighty, what a God! God all-human, what a God! Cry out, sing, shout for joy! Unto us a God is born! born of human labor; a Son of Man! himself a Man, a great Man-God, and incomparable God-Man!

Prof. F. C. Doan, of Meadville Theological College.

"CHRISTMAS COMES BUT ONCE A YEAR."

Emerson, writing about the Emancipation Proclamation, said: "Every step in the history of political liberty is a sally of the human mind into the untried Future, and has the interest of genius. Liberty is a slow growth. It comes like religion,

for short periods and in rare conditions, as if awaiting a culture of the race to make it organic and permanent."

All this one may say, also, of Christmas. It is a season set apart for good cheer and good will. For a little period the selfish maxims of the street are forgotten, and brotherly kindness is elevated into the place of honor. Every one has an opportunity of testing the blessedness which comes from giving.

The cynic is quick to see and point out the discrepancy between the Christmas proclamation of peace and good will and the habitual conduct of mankind. To him it is but a piece of weak hypocrisy that deceives no one. There are moods of moral strenuousness which bring almost the same feelings. What right have we, who know that there is to-day strife between nations, that business life involves the clashing of rival interests, that multitudes are made miserable by unjust conditions, to keep Christmas? Why indulge in a cheerful "make-believe"?

This is to misconceive the meaning of Christmas. It is not the rejoicing over an accomplished fact. It is a brave "sally of the human mind." Beleaguered by care, it now and then breaks through into the region of pure joy. It asserts itself in acts of native generosity. It will not buy and sell, weigh and measure; but it will freely give and freely receive. There is a defiance of the prudential virtues in the enthusiasm for humanity that suddenly takes possession of the heart.

"Christmas comes but once a year!" Yes, wise cynic, you are right; this mood which voices itself in the Christmas anthem has not yet become habitual. If it pleases to sneer, you are not likely to be without your opportunity. On the day after Christmas you will have a chance to say, "I told you so." You are quite right in thinking that a great many things are happening that do not fit into the Christmas carol.

Yet you are a very foolish cynic if you think that to be any reason why we should not join heartily in the Christmas carol. In spite of your scornful eye and curling lip, it is as real as the cares and anxieties it so cheerily defied.

It is the assertion of an indomitable spirit. Again and again it sallies forth. It is beaten back, but it rallies and asserts itself anew. Already there are those who keep perpetual Christmas. In their individual lives, joy comes with giving, good will has established itself as an ordinary every-day principle. It is not yet so in society. Good will manifests itself "for short periods and in rare conditions." But what is true progress in civilization but this, — the culture of the race which shall make the Christmas spirit "organic and permanent."

— *S. M. Crothers.*

THE CHRISTMAS VISION

A child in his mother's arms, a company of shepherds on the hillside, and a sudden splendor of angels in the quiet night — could any grouping of persons bring out more clearly the immense range of man's life and its wonderful possibilities! The manger for poverty of condition, the babe for the common helplessness, the shepherds for the drudgery of universal occupations — and, suddenly, in the night which had darkened the world a thousand thousand unremembered times, out of the old familiar sky, the glory of heavenly faces and the unspeakable melody of angelic voices. So man has always lived, even in rags and sin, with the radiance of the sky over him; so every cradle has rocked a son of God, so every mother has held the child of God in her arms; so every common duty of common men has been an opportunity for heavenly revelation; so every night the glory of the invisible God has been but thinly veiled from the plains where grain ripens, and the hillside where flocks are feeding. The miracle is so wonderful and so

familiar that men have never yet really believed that it has been wrought. A few in every generation have seen the splendor on sorrowful, suffering humanity; many have hoped and have said that they believed; but the great mass of men have never yet dared to live in the joy and peace which must come to those who believe that the world *is* the Lord's and the fulness thereof.

—*Hamilton S. Mabie.*

THE OPPORTUNITY FOR LEADERSHIP

Never did the divine order appear in such clear light as now. Never was God so manifest in the world to him who has eyes to see. Science has made clear as daylight how man has struggled upward through all the religions that the world has ever known, using them as stepping-stones to something higher. Through all religions, through all Bibles, through all creeds, God has been imparting his truth to man as fast as he was capable of receiving it. Religion has been one, though forms have been many. Perfectness has been impossible, but we press forward toward it. The scientific comparison of religion, of late made possible, has taught us to be tolerant of every step which man has found it necessary to take in the long line of human development, while we reverently watch for the unfolding of each new bud of the wonderful plant of religion; "for it doth not yet appear what we shall be."

Now all this is being vaguely recognized everywhere, but almost nowhere is it being preached with enthusiasm as God's message for this new day of religion. Here is the opportunity of the Unitarian Church, — the opportunity for leadership in the new religious advance for which the world is ready. No church is so untrammelled by tradition, no church is so free from the tyranny of creed, no church has dealt so largely with truth at first hand. But this is no time for criticism of others. The

churches of America are ready for this new gospel, but they lack the power of initiative. They are hampered by tradition and timidity. They lack the power of a great faith.

Is the Unitarian Church ready for this great call? Is it ready to stop all controversy? Is it ready to stop striving after mere literary prettiness? Is it ready to stop preaching "I don't," and sound with power the grander note "I believe"? Is it ready to be so filled with the great faith of this present age that it will compel the attention of the world?

If it is, then I believe that the hour of the Unitarian Church has struck; for the world is tired of unrest. The world wants faith. It sorely needs the preaching of the living faith of a living world, a religion which tells of the God of things as they are, — God's law in business, God's law in social life, God's law in national policies. It is tired of the mere empty clothes of religion; it wants the living, breathing reality. It will find it somewhere. Shall it find it in the Unitarian Church? That is the question we are set to solve.

— H. C. McDougall.

Channing, the Unitarian leader, expressed the thought of every Unitarian when he said: "I belong to a community of free minds that love the truth. I desire to escape from the narrow bounds of my particular church in order to live under the open heaven, in the full light of day, seeing with my own eyes and pursuing the truth resolutely, however solitary or arduous the path to which it leads. I am not the mouthpiece of a sect; I speak for myself alone, and I thank God that I live in times and circumstances which make it a duty for me to open my whole soul frankly and unreservedly."

OUR SPIRITUAL MESSAGE AND THE SOCIAL MOVEMENT

If we were asked, "What is the chief characteristic of our time?" I think there can be little doubt as to what the answer would be. Ours is preëminently the time of social questions. We have seen the uprise of what has been called the social consciousness, — the root from which all our social movements have sprung. . . . It is nothing less than religion itself which is the motive force of these social movements of our time in so far as they are movements forward and not backward. What is the passionate, sleepless desire for a better world, a juster social order, the saving of the nation's children from want and vice and crime; what is it but our modern expression of the old Christian principle that we are here to be co-workers with God?

Do you know what the men and women who are feeling this social responsibility need most of all? They are panting for a church, a soul-nourishing, heart-strengthening, uplifting, inspiring church, a living church of the present to the living God. They don't want pamphlets which they can get by the pound. What they want is inward renewal, a strong, deep, divine impulse that will send them forth to work as never before. Here is the experience of one who is the backbone of a great social movement in the industrial world: "There are more people," he says, "who are perishing in our midst from a lack of real human fellowship than are perishing from a lack of the physical necessities of life." If we cannot supply that lack, who can? There is the relation of the church to the social movements of our time.

The church is related to the other social movements of our time as the heart is related to the body and the heavens to the earth. What social reformers and we ourselves have never fully realized is, that the church is the one movement which

touches our social life most deeply and universally. Reforms come and go, questions of the moment rise and pass away, but man's nature abides; and it is to minister to his essential life that the church exists. If it fails to do that, it has failed of its purpose. Its aim is not your party or my party, your policy or mine, but you and me together, without whom there can be no party and no policy. When the church fosters class or party distinctions, with her own hand she is striking a deadly blow at her own deepest life. Other social movements may appeal to classes, to class interests, but the church has no class; it is not sectional or private, but common, public, corporate. The church is the one organization best fitted to equip the individual for the social life. It is the only institution we have which appeals to the individual not as a partisan, a tradesman, or a professional man, but directly as a son of God, — so links him, with a link more enduring than brass, to all his fellow men.

The complaint is constantly made that the church does nothing for the social movement of the time, and many accept the statement as a platitude not to be contradicted. The church does nothing? I answer that wherever there is a really living church, it is doing more for the social movements of our time than all the other social movements put together. Is it nothing to make the blind to see, the deaf to hear, the lame to walk, the dead to rise from their graves? Is it nothing to arouse and waken conscience, to quicken sensitiveness to truth, to transform sensuality into spirituality? Is it nothing to burst open the long closed doors of a man's inner life that he may walk forth sound and erect and true, to be an emancipator in his turn, a very incarnation of God to man? Is it nothing to kindle the fire of hope in the heart of despair; to give a totally new and higher value to the whole of life individually and socially; to lift men out of petty ends and purposes to labor for the redemption of man? Is it nothing to convert a weak soul into

a strong one, to equip men for trial, to bear up under sorrow, to resist giant temptations, to go down to the gates of death, not as cowards, but as conquerors consecrated to eternal ends? The church does nothing? The church is the one movement of our time that is a really radical movement, getting down to the very roots from which nine-tenths of our social evils spring. Its function is not to create societies of Good Samaritans, giving oil and wine and pence; its business is to clear the road from Jerusalem to Jericho, to pierce to the very heart of the whole problem, and to prevent the thief. Woe be to us if in our desire to be doing what we call something we lose the vision of spiritual values and leave undone that great eternal everything for which as congregations and as ministers we have been called into existence.

The one thing that relates us to the social movements of our time is to be faithful to our own high commission. Let us go down and make man in the image of God. We are here, not as many suppose, to make a soft world, but to make strong men to live in a hard world. Our message is not "Come to us and we will carry you into glory," but "Stand upon thy feet and walk, O son of God!" And the reason we fail of the good we would do is, not because religious force is spent and the day of the church is past, but because we ourselves are not good enough. We give to the church, which is the direct minister socially of our religious life, one solitary hour out of the week's one hundred and sixty-eight, and that often with only half a heart, and then we wonder that the church does not perform miracles. Oh! you rational men and women, with your free faith and your reasonable theology, even you cannot get much out of an empty cistern. Though I have all knowledge and understand all mysteries, though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, yea though I give my body to be burned, if I have not love, — no vague, weak sentimentality, but the outgoing, the redeeming love that beareth

all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things; if I have not that love in my heart, never exhausted, ever renewed; then all my knowledge and understanding of theological or social problems, my burned body, my goods to feed the poor, profit me nothing, and they profit the poor exactly in the same proportion. Because the needs of our time are so great, and the demands on us in these days are so imperious, we ourselves need a higher and a deeper consecration; we need to pray as never before,

"Breathe on us, breath of God,
Fill us with life anew,
That we may love what thou dost love
And do what thou wouldst do."

—*Matthew R. Scott.*

NOTES

The appeal recently made through the *Register* and by circulars for an automobile fund is meeting with gratifying response. It is hoped that Unitarians will recognize the largeness of possibility in this propaganda method and enterprise.

A series of missionary conferences under the auspices of the American Unitarian Association, conducted by its President and the Secretary of the Publicity Department, will be held in various New England centers during this winter. Round-table conferences of the ministers and lay workers will be held for the discussion of problems and the consideration of practical methods whereby our Unitarian churches can do wider and more effective work.

In the evening, a Unitarian rally will be held, in which the spirit of missionary interest and enthusiasm will be developed, and directed to channels of effective service. The first of these conferences will be held the first day of this month

in Lowell, Mass. The second will he held in Springfield, Mass., on January 2. Others are being arranged for Worcester, Fitchburg, and Brockton, Mass.

Rev. Minot O. Simons has introduced a unique feature into his church work in Cleveland, Ohio. The men of the church have arranged to lunch together at a down-town restaurant every Tuesday noon, giving a weekly opportunity for the discussion of matters of general interest. This idea might profitably be adopted by many more of our churches.

Rev. Charles F. Dole, minister of the First Church in Jamaica Plain, Mass., is dealing with the social question in a way which promises large results. At a meeting of the Congregational Union, four committees were formed to do social and community work along various lines. The outcome of this experiment will be watched with great interest by us all.

The church in Winnipeg, Manitoba, has adopted a novel method of raising funds to purchase a church lot. Being able to pay for but half of the lot selected, they are inviting the coöperation of Unitarians throughout the continent in aiding to purchase the lot, at fifty cents a square foot. To any one who wishes to invest in Unitarian real estate, this is an excellent opportunity.

At the recent Middle States and Canada Conference, held in Buffalo, the churches were advised to adopt the UNITARIAN CALENDAR as their medium of local publicity. Already, a large number of churches in the Conference are using it.

In the November CALENDAR it was stated, by mistake, that the Congregational Church of Ogdensburg, N. Y., was taking steps to enter our body. The church to which reference was made was the Universalist society of that city.

UNITARIAN SCHOOLS

Hackley School for Boys, Tarrytown-on-Hudson, N. Y.
Home Schools for Girls, West Newton, Mass.
Home School for Girls and Special Students, 115 Beacon St., Boston, Mass.
Howard Seminary for Girls, West Bridgewater, Mass.
The MacDuffie School for Girls, Springfield, Mass.
Powder Point School for Boys, Duxbury, Mass.
Proctor Academy, Andover, N. H.
The Tuckerman School, Boston, Mass., for training of Sunday-school teachers, parish assistants, club workers, and church charity workers.

UNITARIAN PERIODICALS

The Christian Register, at $3.00.
272 Congress St., Boston.
The Unitarian, at $1.00.
104 East 20th St., New York.
The Pacific Unitarian, at $1.00
68 Fremont Street, San Francisco.
Unity, at $2.00.
Abraham Lincoln Centre, Chicago.
Old and New, at $1.00.
Des Moines, Ia.
Every Other Sunday, for children, at 40 cents.
25 Beacon St., Boston.

THE UNITARIAN CALENDAR

The UNITARIAN CALENDAR is published monthly, except July and August, by the American Unitarian Association, at 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. Single subscription, 25 cents a year. Club rate, five for $1.00.

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THE TITLE IS

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The answers given by traditional religion do not satisfy a time marked by honest doubt and strenuous endeavor. The demand is urgent that religion shall give some account of itself which may leave it in possession of the field of attention, on which dogmatic theology and mediæval usages find it difficult to maintain a footing among thoughtful men. The things here set forth are not only intellectually reasonable, but also spiritually efficient, contributing to the constructive process which is the very service Religion should render to Life.

The above is the latest title to be announced in the series of monthly publications, in paper covers, of the best of the older books of the American Unitarian Association. The first, published October 1, was

Pillars of the Temple

By MINOT J. SAVAGE

12mo.; 226 pp.; 25 cents net; 33 cents by mail

Publication Department, AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION

25 BEACON STREET .·. BOSTON, MASS.

e believe in

The Fatherhood of God,
The brotherhood of man,
The leadership of Jesus,
Salvation by character,
The progress of mankind
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We accept the religion of Jesus, holding in accordance with his teaching that practical religion is summed up in love to God and love to man.

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